

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECRP, LA

SUBJECT: CERP 0008 - EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE

PARIS FOR UNESCO; ROME FOR FODAG; VIENNA FOR IAEA AND UNIDO;
MONTREAL FOR ICAO.

REF.: (A) UNCLASSIFIED VIENTIANE 2170

(B) UNCLASSIFIED STATE 042239

1. SUMMARY: WIDE-RANGING UN PROGRAM SUP-
PLEMENTS, ASSISTS, AND, IN TWO CASES PROVIDES
ESSENTIAL OPERATING PERSONNEL FOR MULTI-AID PRO-
JECTS. UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE (RESREP) VERY
DEDICATED BUT HAVING SOME DIFFICULTY ASSERTING HIS
AUTHORITY OVER ENTIRE UN PROGRAM, PRINCIPALLY IN
FACE OF NEW, WELL-STAFFED UNICEF OFFICE HEADED BY
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ACTIVE RESREP. UNDP RESREP STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY

COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF PLAN (COMGENPLAN). MAJOR SHORTCOMINGS ARE SATELLITIC CHARACTER OF PROGRAM, I.E. ITS DEPENDENCE ON OTHER AID INPUTS, AND ITS EXCESSIVE COST TO RLG FOR COUNTERPART SUPPORT UNDER PRESENT STRINGENT NATIONAL FINANCIAL CONDITIONS. MISSION BELIEVES IMPERATIVE THAT UN BUDGETS EXPAND TO COVER ALL LOCAL COSTS.

2. FOLLOWING ARE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED IN REF B:

A. ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM. UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE (RESREP) WITH STRONG ASSISTANCE OF RLG COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF PLAN (COMGENPLAN) TRYING BECOME EFFECTIVE LEADER AGAINST LONG-STANDING PROCEDURES FOR DIRECT PLANNING BETWEEN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RLG MINISTRIES. BELIEVE HE IS MAKING HEADWAY ALTHOUGH UNICEF HAS JUST OPENED OFFICE WITH OWN RESREP AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND PLANNING PERSONNEL. BY CONTRAST, LARGE WHO REPRESENTATION HEADED BY OWN RESREP WORKS CLOSELY WITH UNDP RESREP. ONLY OTHER UN RESREP, FOR IMF, HAS FEW PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNDP RESREP. ALL OTHER SPECIALIZED AGENCIES REPRESENTATIVES (EXCEPT UNFPA AND WHO) DEPEND UPON UNDP FOR PROGRAM FUNDS. SOME WHO ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY UNDP, OTHERS BY WHO ITSELF. IBRD JUST RE-ENTERING LAOS (AFTER NAM NGUM PHASE I) BUT APPARENTLY WORKING REASONABLY CLOSELY WITH UNDP RESREP.

B. COORDINATION OF ALL EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. IN CONNECTION WITH FORMULATION OF NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN (1975-80) FOLLOWING INTERIM 1974-75 ONE-YEAR PLAN (SEE REF A) COMGENPLAN IS HOPING TO ENCOMPASS ALL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES INSTEAD OF ONLY THE LIMITED PORTION THAT WAS INCLUDED IN FIRST FIVE-YEAR QTE PLAN CADRE UNQTE (1969-74). AT PRESENT, EXCEPT FOR ANNUAL OR SEMI-ANNUAL MEETINGS WITH REFERENCE TO UN PROGRAM, COMGENPLAN PROGRAM AND PROJECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH BILATERAL AIDS AND OTHER MULTILATERAL AIDS (PRINCIPALLY ADB) ARE HELD CLOSE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHEST. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN BILATERAL AIDS OCCURS ON INFORMAL BASIS - FOR EXAMPLE, USAID DIRECTOR DISCUSSES RESPECTIVE AID PROBLEMS AND PROJECTS WITH OTHER BILATERAL AID DIRECTORS AND MULTILATERAL AID REPRESENTATIVES. A ONE-YEAR ATTEMPT (1972) TO ESTABLISH PERIODIC MEETINGS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL PRINCIPAL AID DONORS UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF ASSISTANT UNDP RESREP CEASED WHEN

THE GROUP ASKED THE UNDP TO PRESENT TO RLG IN NAME OF GROUP, A SERIES OF RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ADMINISTRATION OF COMBINED SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMS. THE UNDP FELT THAT THE WORDING OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS SOUNDED AS THOUGH GROUP HAD GANGED UP TO DICTATE TO RLG. UNDP UNDER PRESENT RESREP HAS BEEN MOST METICULOUS OF ALL DONORS IN FOLLOWING COORDINATION PROCEDURES DESIRED BY COMGENPLAN. COMGENPLAN HAS RECIPROCATED BY INSISTING ON UNDP RESREP'S PRE-EMINENT ROLE IN UN PROGRAMMING.

C. COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEWS. UNDP RESREP HAS PRESENTED NINE-STEP PROCESS COVERING PERIOD 30 NOVEMBER 73 TO 16 AUGUST 74 FOR PREPARATION AND REVIEW OF SECOND COUNTRY PROGRAM, JANUARY 1975 TO DECEMBER 1979. STEP 5, THE ON-SCHEDULE REVIEW OF 5-6 MARCH (REPORTED REF A), WAS ONLY POINT AT WHICH BILATERAL AND OTHER MULTILATERAL AID WAS OFFERED OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT. IN THIS CASE, PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS WERE DISTRIBUTED DURING THE MEETING, ALLOWING NO TIME TO STUDY OR TO CONFER WITH MISSION CHIEFS. NO FURTHER ACTION BY OTHER AID HAS BEEN REQUESTED. RESREP CONFERS OFTEN WITH COMGENPLAN AT WHICH MEETINGS NO FOREIGN ADVISORS TO COMGENPLAN ARE PERMITTED. MAJOR DEFICIENCIES IN CURRENT REVIEW ARE FAILURE OF COMGENPLAN TO (1) IMPOSE EITHER A SYSTEM OF PRIORITIES OR TO STATE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES TO WHICH THE PROGRAM CAN ADHERE, AND (2) ESTIMATE THE LAO COUNTERPART MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TOTAL PROGRAM AND ACCEPT ONLY THOSE PROJECTS FOR WHICH IT CAN SUPPLY NECESSARY MANPOWER, UNDOUBTEDLY THE MOST SERIOUS TECHNICAL CONSTRAINT TO LAO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IS THE LACK OF MANAGERIAL AND SUB-MANAGERIAL MANPOWER.

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D. APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS - IN PAST YEAR, USAID HAS RECEIVED FROM UNDP SUMMARIES OF THREE PROPOSED PROJECTS. COMMENTS WERE REQUESTED AND GIVEN. ON THE OTHER HAND, UN TECHNICIANS SOMETIMES DISCUSS THEIR PROBLEMS WITH COUNTER-PART BILATERAL TECHNICIANS, OFTEN RESULTING IN INFORMALLY ARRANGED MUTUAL BENEFITS AS WELL AS FEEDBACK TO THE RESREP AND MISSION CHIEFS, ULTIMATELY AFFECTING PLANNING IN THE SAME SUBJECT AREAS. DIRECT AND FREQUENT LIAISON IS MAINTAINED BY THE USAID DIRECTOR WITH THE RESREP AS WELL AS BETWEEN US REPRESENTATIVES AT THE MINPLAN AND US PROGRAM PERSONNEL, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE RESREP AND HIS ASSISTANTS ON THE OTHER.

E. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION -

1. UNESCO PROJECT LAO/71/504, PREPARATION OF STUDY MATERIALS
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IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE FOR THE TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE (DONG DOK). VOLUME OF MATERIALS PREPARED HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTING. HAVE HAD TO SUBSTITUTE MATERIALS PREPARED BY US HAWAII TEAM FOR FA NGUM SCHOOLS. GENERAL FEELING THAT TIME OF LAO COUNTERPARTS HAS BEEN WASTED. RESREP WILL DISCONTINUE THIS PROJECT NEXT YEAR.

2. ITU PROJECT LAO/71/506, TELECOMMUNICATIONS TRAINING CENTER. USAID TECHNICIANS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY PLANS AND APPARENT QUALITY OF TECHNICIANS FOR THIS JUST-STARTING

PROJECT. BUILDING WAS BUILT BY RLG; EQUIPMENT FROM UNDP AND FRANCE.

3. WHO PROJECT LAO/68/015 (UNDP FUNDED), NURSES TRAINING. LONG-STANDING, EXCELLENT PROJECT, GOOD UN STAFF OF THREE TEACHERS; CLOSE COOPERATION WITH US. SCHOOL BUILT BY US.

4. WHO PROJECT LAO/68/016 AND OCT PROJECT LAO/68/001 (BOTH UNDP FUNDED), PHYSIOTHERAPEUTIC AND PROSTHETICS CENTER. THE PROSTHETICIST HAS BEEN VERY PRODUCTIVE IN THIS BADLY-NEEDED WORK. UNTIL THIS YEAR, USAID/RO WAS ONLY SOURCE FOR \$60,000 ANNUAL SUPPLY REQUIREMENT. FUTURE SOURCE UNKNOWN.

5. WHO PROJECT LAO/9601 (UNDP FUNDED), MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH. NOT-TOO-ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FOR FUNDAMENTALLY U.S. PROGRAM. AT THIS TIME.

6. WHO PROJECT WHO/4001 (WHO FUNDED) DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES. PART OF MULTI-NATIONAL-RLG PROJECT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NATION-WIDE HEALTH SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE. PHYSICIAN AND NURSE EDUCATOR PROVIDE USEFUL INPUT.

7. WHO PROJECT WHO/6201, SCHOOL MEDICINE. FIVE QUALIFIED TEACHERS WHO SUPPLEMENT LARGER RLG/FRENCH STAFF.

8. WHO PROJECT WHO/4201, PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY. LAB-ORATORY AND EQUIPMENT FURNISHED AND MAINTAINED BY U.S. PRESENT TWO-PERSON WHO STAFF NOT AS GOOD AS PREVIOUS ONE. NEED SUBSTANTIAL EXPANSION THIS PROJECT.

9. WHO PROJECT WHO/2001, ANTI-MALARIA. WHO DR. GOULIOURAS (ONLY UN INPUT) DIRECTS JOINT RLG-US-IRC-WHO PROJECT IN VERY EFFECTIVE MANNER.

10. WHO PROJECT WHO/5601, NUTRITION. UN NUTRITIONIST PROVIDES NUTRITION TRAINING FOR ALL VIENTIANE MEDICAL TRAINING FACILITIES.

11. UNIDO PROJECT LAO/68/005, INDUSTRIAL ECONOMY. TWO EXPERTS AT COMGENPLAN; MEDIOCRE PERFORMANCE ACCORDING COMGENPLAN.

12. ICAO PROJECT LAO/73/005, CIVIL AVIATION SUPPORT. ONE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIGHLY COMPETENT EXPERT WHO HAS DIFFICULT JOB HELPING LAO UTILIZE EXCESSIVE AMOUNTS OF OUT-DATED AIR TRAFFIC COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT SOLD TO LAO BY CONTRACTORS AND RECENTLY INSTALLED.

13. FAO PROJECT LAO/72/005, VETERINARY LABORATORY. TECHNICIAN DIVIDES TIME WITH OFFICE IN SAIGON. LEVEL OF EFFORT AND COUNTERPART ASSISTANCE INADEQUATE TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE PRODUCTION LABORATORY. SHOULD INCREASE SUPPORT OR ATTEMPT COMBINE WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRY.

14. FAO PROJECTS LAO/70/001, COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE, LAO/72/004, FORESTRY, AND LAO/73/003, AGRICULTURAL RADIO. SINGLE EXPERTS, INDETERMINATE RESULTS.

15. OCT PROJECT LAO/68/012, PHOTOGRAMMETRY. EXPERT OPERATES AS ADVISOR TO CHIEF, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE. PLANS PROJECTS.

16. OCT PROJECT LAO/241/011, DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS. EXPERT DIRECTING FIRST FORMAL CENSUS OF MAJOR LAO TOWN AND VIENTIANE

PLAIN. U.S. PROVIDES COMPUTER ASSISTANCE. VALUABLE PROJECT.
17. OCT PROJECT SD/0267, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. ONE EXPERT AT
MINPLAN AND ONE AT MINRURAL AFFAIRS. BOTH NON-PRODUCTIVE
PRESUMABLY DUE TO POOR RLG DIRECTION AND GUIDANCE.
18. ILO PROJECT LAO/68/011, HANDICRAFTS PROMOTION. TWO
EXPERTS CONCENTRATING ON HANDICRAFT TEXTILE PRODUCTION. PRO-
BABLE IMPROVEMENT IN HITHERTO NON-PRODUCTIVE PROJECT.

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ALMOST ALL PROJECTS ABOVE SUFFERED FOLLOWING DIFFICULTIES:
(1) VERY SLOW RECRUITMENT OF UN TECHNICIANS; (2) WHOLLY
INADEQUATE UN FUNDING OF SUPPORTING NEEDS, IN SOME CASES TO
POINT WHERE TECHNICIAN'S INPUT BECAME ALMOST VALUELESS; (3)
SHORTAGE OF KIP SUPPORT BY RLG; AND (4) LOW TRAINING AND SKILL
LEVEL OF LAO COUNTERPARTS. COMPLAINTS ABOUT LACK OF LAO
MOTIVATION MAY REFLECT EITHER ON TECHNICIAN OR LAO COUNTERPART.

F. PROJECT EVALUATION - MISSION HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF EVALUATING PROCEDURE OUTLINED IN REF B, ALTHOUGH THE TRIPARTITE PROCEDURE IS USED IN EVALUATING PROPOSED PROJECTS. UNDP RESREP PUBLISHED (FEBRUARY, 1974) QTE BASIC DOCUMENT FOR SECOND COUNTRY PROGRAM UNQTE. FIRST VERSION, IN ENGLISH, CONTAINED MANY ERRORS, MISINTER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRETATIONS AND UNVERIFIED RAW DATA AND HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN ALTHOUGH COPIES HAD BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO NEW YORK. FRENCH VERSION HAS BEEN CORRECTED AND GREATLY IMPROVED AND IS NOW ONLY ACCEPTED VERSION. IT NOW QUALIFIES AS GOOD SUMMARY.

G. FOLLOW-UP WITH UNDP AND EXECUTING AGENCIES - PROBABLY UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN UNDP PROGRAMMING WITHOUT BETTER COMGENPLAN GUIDELINES, BUT BELIEVE UNDP MUST IMPROVE PROJECT DESIGN TO MAKE PROJECTS SELF-SUFFICIENT. IN THIS CONNECTION MISSION CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE NEED TO INCLUDE ALL LOCAL COSTS IN PROJECT BUDGETS, EVEN IF MAJOR UN POLICY CHANGE IS REQUIRED. AT PRESENT, LOCAL COSTS OF UN PROGRAM LARGELY AND INDIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY MULTI-NATION FOREIGN EXCHANGE OPERATIONS FUND (FEOf) WHICH HARD PRESSED TO MEET OWN OBJECTIVES OF UNDERWRITING RLG NATIONAL BUDGET DEFICIT AND FURNISHING NECESSARY FOREIGN EXCHANGE. BELIEVE COMMEN-DATION DUE WHO RESREP GUY FERRAND FOR PRACTICAL, HARMONIOUS, AND EFFECTIVE COORDINATION MULTIPLE WHO ACTIVITIES WITH FULL RANGE OTHER DONORS MEDICAL AND RELATED ACTIVITIES. WHITEHOUSE

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